

Col. John Kingman House
Main St.
Cincinnati
Cortland County
New York

HABS No. NY-5600

HABS
NY,
12-CINC,
1-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Building Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. NY-5600

(Page 1)

COLONEL JOHN KINGMAN HOUSE

Location: On east side of junction of Main Street (Cincinnati Road, NY Rte. 166B) and Telephone Road (NY Rte. 159B), Cincinnati, Cortland County, New York.

Present Owner: Mrs. Walter C. Wheeler.

Present Occupant: Mrs. Wheeler.

Present Use: Residence.

Brief Statement of Significance: House built by Colonel John Kingman, pioneer settler of Cincinnati who contributed to development of the town.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners:
 - 1793-95 Colonel John Kingman bought 15 acres on Lot 19 of Military Tract about 1793-95. Later increased his holdings to 150 acres. At his death in 1859, the property passed to John Kingman, Jr. (d. 1884).
 - 1903 Kingman, Root, and others, heirs, designated Kingman and Root to Philo C. Wheeler, recorded August 10, 1903, Cortland County Liber of Deeds 105, p. 405.
 - 1922 Philo C. Wheeler (d. 1922) to Hattie N. Wheeler, Cortland County Liber of Deeds 126, p. 410.
 - 1939 Hattie N. Wheeler (d. 1939) to Walter C. Wheeler and Annie Wheeler Baldwin, Cortland County Liber of Deeds 183, p. 356.
 - 1954 Annie Wheeler Baldwin by agreement to Walter C. Wheeler, April 26, 1954, Cortland County Liber of Deeds 228, p. 133.
 - 1957 Walter C. Wheeler to Walter C. Wheeler and Julia C. Wheeler, August 20, 1957, Cortland County Liber of Deeds 253, p. 142.
 - 1963 Walter C. Wheeler (d. March 3, 1963) to Julia C. Wheeler, his wife, Cortland County Wills.
2. Date of erection: 1830.
3. Architect: Probably designed by the builder, George Cole.

4. Builder, suppliers, etc.: George Cole built the Kingman House. He also built The Methodist Church, begun in 1843 and completed in 1844 on land bought from Colonel John Kingman; The Academy; a steam mill a short distance south of the Methodist Church (the first mill of its kind--many people thought the steam power was unsafe); and his own home, directly across from the Methodist Church.
 5. Original plans, construction, etc.: Three houses were built by Colonel John Kingman on the same site. First, a log cabin, second a modest frame house, and finally the present house. This third house was built as a two family residence, although from the exterior it looks like a single family house. Colonel Kingman occupied the "south side" and his son, John Kingman, Jr., the "north side".
 6. Alterations and additions: Philo C. Wheeler bought the house in 1903. He remodeled it and moved to it from the house at the corner of Taylor Avenue and Main Street in 1905. The Wheeler family have occupied the house since that date (1905). South side occupied by Philo C. Wheeler. North side occupied by Mr. and Mrs. A. Ray Baldwin (Mrs. Ray Baldwin, nee Annie Wheeler). The house itself is substantially unaltered from the date of its construction except for the porches which were enlarged. Roofs of the wings were raised from flat to gable roofs and small window panes were replaced by large ones. Two front windows, center block, were replaced by one large window. No significant alterations to the interior.
- B. Historical Events and Persons Connected with the Structure: First settlement of Cincinnatus, one of the Military Tracts, was in 1795 under the auspices of John Kingman, a native of Massachusetts, who was born in Wethersfield, October 3, 1770. With three or four men from Lennox, Massachusetts, he came to Cincinnatus at the age of 25 and settled on Lot 19, cleared the land and built a log cabin and later the present house (about 1830). In a military capacity, John Kingman rose to Colonel. He was the first supervisor of Cincinnatus, a post that he held for eleven years. Colonel Kingman built the first house, the first store, the first inn, (Where the Hotel Bennett now stands) and the first school in Owego (located just south of his house).

John Kingman died January 30, 1859. Among his children were John, Jr. (1797-1884), a successful merchant and farmer who held the office of Postmaster for many years, was Town Supervisor, and was sent to the State Legislature for one term;

Oliver, an Associate Judge (1828-1846), and member of the Legislature; and George, who served in the Legislature. The last Kingman left Cincinnatus in 1915.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Old Views:

Drawing of "Res. of John Kingman..." and of John Kingman, Jr. and his wife, Louisa Kingman, in Historical Atlas of Cortland County, p. 56.

Picture of Colonel John Kingman Home, before and after remodeling in 1904, in Cortland County Sesquicentennial Souvenir Book, p. 22.

2. Bibliography:

Bulletin of the Cortland County Historical Society, v. 16. no. 5. December, 1962 on file at the Cortland County Historical Society, Cortland, New York. "The Brick Store in Cincinnatus". Walter C. Wheeler. (John, Jr. went into business in Spring, 1831.)

Cortland County Chronicles. pub. by Cortland County Historical Society. 1957. Cortland, New York. v. 1, p. 218. (John Kingman built first hotel.)

Cortland County Directory. 1869. on file at Cortland County Historical Society, Cortland, New York.

Cortland County Sesquicentennial Souvenir Book. pub. the Cortland County Historical Society. Cortland, New York. p. 22. Picture of John Kingman Home.

Ensign and Everts. Historical Atlas of Cortland County, 1876. pp 25, 56. Picture of house, John Kingman, Jr. and his wife with short biography.

Goodurn, H.C. Pioneer History of Cortland County. C.B. Burdick, New York, 1859. p. 194.

Smith, Florence. Historical Records of Early Cincinnatus. v. 1, Pioneers, pp. 12-13, John Kingman, Sr. pp. 14-15, John Kingman, Jr. (Florence Smith--town historian 1921-1958).

Smith, H.P. History of Cortland County. D. Mason & Company. 1885. pp 58, 70, 369.

Prepared by Mrs. Walter C. Wheeler
Local historian for
Cincinnati for the
Cortland County
Historical Society
April, 1964

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: A Greek Revival "temple" style with wings.
2. Condition of fabric: Good.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Dimensions: Two stories with attic over central part; three bays in main section.
2. Foundations: Stone wall, front wall 23" deep, hand-hewn beams, pegged in cellar. Beams 9" to 9½", iron bars at windows (two front ones in cellar of main block), cellar stairs, 9 treads.
3. Wall construction: Plank covered with cove siding on front, other three sides clapboard, painted white.
4. Structural system: Wood frame.
5. Porches: Originally narrow porches on each wing of central block. (See picture in Everts, Ensign and Everts Atlas.) Porches were enlarged by Mr. Philo Wheeler in 1904. Original Ionic columns moved out to widen the porches and extend north wing porch to include central door; hatchway at rear of stone masonry.
6. Chimneys: Originally brick chimneys at south end, at north end and at center of house. Brick made locally.
7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Three front doors, original doors were replaced by doors with windows in 1904.
 - b. Windows: Original windows, double sash, nine-over-nine lights; small windows were replaced by large windows in 1904 by Philo C. Wheeler. Windows

originally had shutters.

8. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: Original roofs on wings of central block were flat. They were raised in 1904 to gable roofs by Mr. Wheeler. Roof, now metal, originally hand-cut shingles, hand-cut nails. Central block, gable roof, pediment facing street.
- b. Cornice, eaves: Undecorated frieze and cornice, box eaves, pilaster strips at outside corners of main block and wings.

C. Description of the Interior:

1. Floor plans:

- a. South side: First floor--Entrance hall, two living rooms, dining room, kitchen, den, powder room. Second floor--Three bedrooms, also room at head of back stairs, bath.
- b. North side: First floor--Two living rooms, dining room, kitchen, bedroom, bath. Second floor--Small bedroom at head of stairs, front bedroom.

2. Stairways:

- a. South side: Front stairs (entrance hall), 13 treads, 14 risers, cherry newel post and railing, treads are pine-turned spindles. Back stairs off kitchen 12 treads, 13 risers with landing turn near top and one at bottom one step up.
- b. North side: Stairs leading out of front living room 12 treads, 13 risers, turn near top.

3. Flooring: First floor hardwood except for kitchen (since 1904 when Mr. Wheeler remodeled). Original pine flooring was overlaid with hardwood flooring. Kitchen pine floor boards are original 9½" to 14" wide. All other floors both sides are matched boards (soft-wood pine) random width.

4. Wall and ceiling finish: Plaster.

5. Doorways and doors: Original three entrance doors were solid paneled wood, replaced by doors with windows in 1904.

Interior doors are original, each with two panels.

6. Decorative features and trim: Woodwork in hall (central block) was originally painted, stencil grained. One original door in upper hall remains; Ionic columns, wainscoting in kitchens; door lintels and cornice decorated by simple carved moulding (see HABS photo); baseboards and all woodwork plain, simple (pine). When remodeled in 1904, woodwork in living rooms of "south side" was changed, mouldings added to baseboards. Oak woodwork replaced pine.
7. Notable hardware: Door knobs are porcelin, mottled brown except hall and living rooms where they are embossed metal.
8. Lighting: Modern electric.
9. Heating: One fireplace; central heat, hot water system (south side) oil, oil hot air, (north side).

D. Site and Surroundings:

1. Orientation: House faces west at junction of Main Street. A small green in front of house, site of boulder in memory of pioneers and revolutionary soldiers. Brick store, a landmark on southwest corner. Hotel on northwest corner. Bank next door.
2. Outbuildings: Old barn, two other buildings originally part of a chicken plant; smaller building concrete and clapboard; larger building wood; old fire hall, wood, two stories.
3. Landscaping and walks: Spacious, tree-shaded lawn and flowerbeds.

Prepared by Mrs. Walter C. Wheeler
Local historian for
Cincinnati for the
Cortland County Historical
Society
April, 1964.

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

These records are part of the documentation of structures in the Southern Tier of New York State, undertaken by HABS in cooperation with the Cortland County Historical Society and the Valley Development Foundation, Inc.

The project was under the general supervision of John Poppeliers, Chief of the Historic American Buildings Survey. The historical material and architectural material was prepared by Mrs. Walter C. Wheeler in April, 1964. Photographs were taken by Jack E. Boucher in April, 1966. The project was edited for deposit in the Library of Congress by Constance Werner Ramirez, October, 1974.